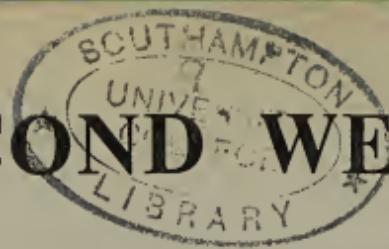


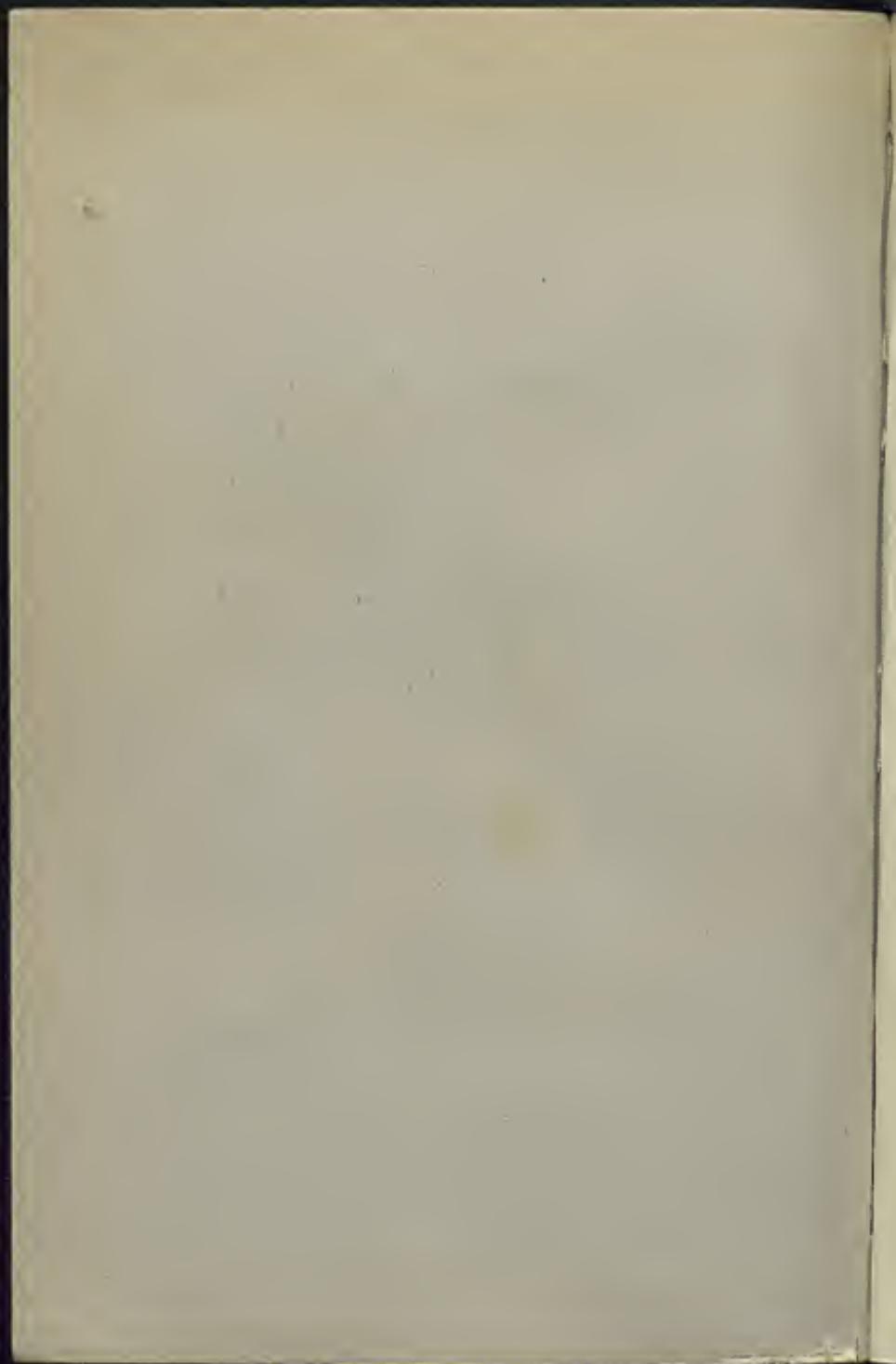
SECOND WESSEX



SUMMER TERM ISSUE

1952

25 JUN 1952



SECOND WESSEX
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Summer Term Issue

1952

Vol. vii.

No. 2



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EDITORIAL

It has been very difficult to make a final selection of material for this magazine, owing to the magnificent response of contributors to our requests for copy. There have been some criticisms launched against this magazine on account of its literary tendencies. These tendencies are due, firstly, to the fact that nearly all the contributions tended to be of a literary nature; and, secondly, because the aim of those producing this periodical is that it should be a literary one. What it may become in the hands of future editors is, of course, up to them, but we feel that we are satisfying a particular need in the University by producing a literary magazine whose chief public consists of undergraduates. We have aimed at including quite a large selection of poetry this time, partly because of the large quantity submitted and partly *pour encourager les autres*. The next Editor intends, I believe, at some future date, to make an anthology of student poetry published in recent issues of SECOND WESSEX.

I should like to thank all contributors and would-be contributors, hoping that they will be as willing to contribute to the next issue.

FIONA MACMILLAN,
Editor



JONES IS DRAMA

One hundred young men thinking in a room, searching for a rule to measure the world, talking about life and how it is presented by artists.

One man is talking, listening intently, watching his own thoughts form. The ninety-nine others are smoking.

You, personally, are the extra one; the one who walks into the room late. You haven't given up enjoying yourself. You are in your second childhood, and, lucky for you, it started soon after the first. Your childhood is the only thing you care about.

You walk into this room and you know what the trouble is about, because you were the cause of it. Last night you gave them a play and they came along to see, came along to hear it. You knew that it had to be a serious play, you even infected your actors that way. Such a rare audience, one to be appreciated; and you couldn't help enjoying yourself.

You were good to them, and had taken the trouble to probe a bit into vital problems; so that, as the play proceeded you had to restrain your actors a bit, restrain them even from natural movement, like walking. The meaning was there in the speech. The symbols you used in your previous plays were tied up tight off-stage. Only the actors you couldn't tie up, at least not altogether. You painted them miserable to slow them down, and they stood still, breathing. Two actors, young and drooping, one with powder in his hair; and the powdered one had this to say:

'My son, why do you write so cynically about your grandfather? August Bernstad was a happy man all the time he lived. He was discontented at times, agreed, but beneath that discontent lay a constant satisfaction in the life he was leading. He never asked for much. He never wanted more than just one thing from life. And now you sit down to write about it and you can't describe it, can you? Perhaps because you think what he achieved was not worth much. Well, let us admit that he achieved nothing; those who came afterwards fulfilled his mission for him. Fate stepped in, killed him, and saved him from the disappointment of gaining his objective. That is why he died as happily as he lived. And if, as you say, he cried when he lay dying, it was because he was glad to be surrounded by his friends, he felt like the dying leader, he felt an inspiration to his fellow men. Put you in that position, and what would your tears mean? Temper, more likely, or fear. He was never afraid. And that may not be a very fine thing to say about a man, that he was never afraid, but if it is true, it can be very helpful for the man in question. You may be no less of a man for being constantly afraid, but think how miserable it makes you.'

'You are afraid, you are thwarted all the time; you can never have all you want, like old Bernstad, because you want everything. You don't want to follow a God or to reject a God, and be like other people. You want to be a God yourself and comprehend an entire Universe. You will never get that far because, I think, you are a little too weak. Were you stronger and more persevering, were you able to fight continually along the same path that you are following now, and to survive continually, which I don't think you could—you grow pale!—you would be like a young man I met the other afternoon, a boy called Jones.'

'He was like you in many ways but he didn't have your nervous eyes. Oh, you know him?—It'll kill you, you know, going on like this; you won't last it. Now this boy . . . well, never mind about this boy Jones, at least not now. But you oughtn't to try to keep him away from here. You're afraid, aren't you? Well, perhaps you have every right to be. I can't see quite so clearly myself at this moment. I'm not quite sure what would happen to you if Jones came here right now. It might be the end of you.

'I can't help you. I can't do a thing for you. It takes me all my time to repress my satisfaction at seeing you in this mess. When I was young, everything was all right; maybe we were living in the harvest of the old ideas. My generation have that much to be thankful for; we can thank your grandfather for that. He gave us a rickety old half-god and that was all we needed, my generation. You! What God have you got, my boy? Only the God you are trying to make of yourself; but maybe that's my fault too.

'Except for one little thing. I can't stand the products of your crazy mind. I can do you this one kindness as a father. I can tell you that your stuff may be pretty and pretty, but it does not hang together. It picks holes. And it will never take you any further. It hasn't got the necessary strength. You look ill enough already. You could never prise this sort of stuff out of your system. But never mind. You are only one young man. There are others, and stronger men than you, waiting round the corner: men like Jones, who in their speed could drag you to your knees and make you cry,

"I am slow, I am sluggish,
I am dreadful slow.
What can I do about myself?"

'The passion of the soul of Papa Bernstad' is something you will never understand, write about it as you will. "His cheeks flapped into the wild night . . . his fat arms waving and his little muffled head haloed by the golden moon." I sense pity there. Old Bernstad doesn't need your pity. You're the one that needs all the pity. Jones will be coming soon, and you will feel lost among your own kind.

'You were right, anyway, about the bear-hunters shooting the old man by mistake. You got your facts right there. And about his asking the hunters for some wine. But don't you see what a beautiful death that was? Why did you have to add that comment about carrying his principles to the grave? And why did you talk about the villagers being more disappointed at the return of the empty-handed hunting-party, than they were at the death of their leader?—"What is more, their families went hungry for a whole week." My boy, there is more romance in life than that.

'I see Jones coming up to the window. You look like death. He has got more courage than you've got, better blood. You couldn't possibly go with him. When he comes in here, that is the end of your big dream world. You couldn't possibly fight your way through to a new humility. This is the end for you.'

And now it is the morning after, the time for discussion; and the end for you, too, perhaps. Because, a few minutes after you have entered the room, to listen to the young man talking; as you settle back to hear of chaos and cosmos, of the thrill of the unresolved climax, just then you become aware of something unusual. Something strange in the room.

But the young man continues, listening intently, looking thrilled and surprised at the things he says. He talks of the three generations in the play. He talks, and the other men smoke; the flower of last night's audience. You look for that something strange in the room, and listen all the time to the conversation.

The young man was thrilled, profoundly moved. He had heard of the agony of breaking through to chaos, had heard of the power of imagination. And he had waited, like everyone else, for the entry of the young man Jones; but that was the end of the play. They were all profoundly moved.

You look up; and there before your eyes is a sight such as you never saw in your life before. Just inside the door. A man with a flush on his face, and the power of heaven and hell in his eyes.

ALFRED COLYER



EPITAPHIUS HOMINUM (After Moschus)

The one last delicate evidence of a life,
now no life, dances—
tour en l'air and *sur les pointes* across the grass
to a sodden resting-place.
Season of hibernation and slow heart-beats,
suitably reptilian,
of the earth, earthy; sucking holly-hock,
coriander and cool rose
down into the cloy and the unspanned must of your tomb.

But these things shall come a second time,
peeping into the Phoenix year.
Then there will be new life of startling green,
and the fragrancy of summer after.
And we men, wise beyond eternal wisdom,
strong creators of our world,
cut off in the autumn of age, shall lie,
sense-less, in hollow sleep,
a deep, dank, unawakening endless sleep.

M. D. W. GOWERS

PASTORALE (After Theocritus)

I want no land for myself,
nor a cushion on a hard chair,
nor to be carried, birdwise,
across the surface of the sun
nor, on a bank of air, to thread
the torn edges of the clouds together.

My fingers like the wind
can gently waft your hair.
Sit here and be content—
a corrugated sea below,
one solitary sail nodding sleepily,
one lone bird's wheeling cry.

And we will sing, not tunefully,
but low, and stare into the haze,
sharing that harmony
of whispered inconsequence,
of mind and spirit intertwined.
What more can a man want?

M. D. W. GOWERS

THE BASIC PROBLEM OF RED-BRICK THE SOCIAL CLASH

Together with the recent rapid development of the Redbrick University, with the introduction of free education, and the increased industrial demand for specialists of University education, there has been a great change in the type of society which provides the student body. Universities no longer educate mainly persons who are assured of social and economic status as members of a ruling and privileged minority. People are now selected for higher education because of their potential mental capacities and no regard is taken of their social class. Thus, presumably the contemporary type of student, who has succeeded in merit, should represent ideal material for the cultivating and refining influences of a university education.

However, there is a constant plea for the cultivated undergraduate. University staffs complain that they now have to deal with young men and women who seem interested only to get on, capture the best degree within reach and get out. There is the common outcry that university students are too utilitarian in their attitude to study, too limited in interests, too little skilled in the graces of life to suit well with traditions of leisured culture. Dr. Julian Huxley writes: 'Men and women who reach university on merit instead of money, are, in the view of many of those responsible for them during their undergraduate career, below the standard to be expected of an *élite*—in all-round character and interests, in intellectual initiative and even in general education.'

One needs must admit the general cultural sterility of the Redbrick University. To take University College, Southampton, as an example, the occasions are rare—or non-existent—when students submit articles to leading magazines and newspapers. The standard of debate is generally accepted as deplorable. There is more pretence and affectation of culture than there actually exists. In comparison with the ideal university society which J. M. Keynes, and the group who were later to form the famous Bloomsbury circle, established at Cambridge at the beginning of the century the community of Redbrick stands apathetically drab and insignificant. It is, of course, an elementary mistake to base a hypothesis upon a single instance. The degree of culture and education, which Keynes' group attained, is of course uncommon, and the example is taken for the vivid contrast it offers. However, the higher communities of Oxford and Cambridge still produce the men of the times, the evidence of which is easily perceived in Parliamentary and the high administrative circles. In the recently elected Parliament, 185 M.P.s are products of either Oxford or Cambridge.

Why are the student bodies of Redbrick so 'below the standard to be expected of an *élite*—in all-round character and interests, in intellectual initiative and even in general education'?

The psychologist states that the I.Q. of the student population is high.* Nevertheless, without reference to I.Q. statistics, it is surely obvious that

* *University Quarterly.*

students who have the mental capacity to obtain good Honours Degrees should also be capable of acquiring a genuine cultural background.

The most habitual argument proffered as an explanation of the deficiencies of a Redbrick student is that the increasing emphasis on specialisation which commences in the very early stages of the Sixth Form at school, and is even more emphasised in the university syllabus, narrows his outlook. All recent reforms in the school curriculum are aimed at rectifying this failing. The universities treat the problem by advocating closer contact between lecturer and student and the building of more Halls of Residence. These measures are highly important and necessary to offset the canalising influence of specialisation.

However, these measures do not strike the crux of the problem of the student's low standard of general culture. They are merely secondary remedies.

The plea for a more cultivated undergraduate has rarely been related closely enough to considerations of social change that are reflected in the student body. It is the background of the student which is at fault, the social and home environment. Intelligence is innate but attitude and cultural development are primarily the products of environment. The home and social conditions under which the normal Redbrick student strives are aptly described by Bruce Truscot*:

"The private lives of undergraduates differ very widely. In the average Redbrick home there is severer economic pressure and the undergraduate is never away from his family long enough to be free from it. Anyone at all familiar with students' homes will be familiar with the types of reminder that, often in quite a kindly way, are forever being hammered into them:

"Well, Aggie knows we can't do anything more for her."

"This is her only chance to get on in life and she'd better make the most of it."

"We've all pinched and denied ourselves to send you to College, my boy, so you just see you do well in your exams."

"Tom'll have to help us with the expenses when he's finished at university so it's to be hoped that he gets a good job."

What boy or girl of 19 or 20 can be expected to think of acquiring knowledge for its intrinsic value when life's young song has to be sung to a dad or mum obbligato of that nature?

The great majority of Redbrick students experience at a higher or lesser degree these fundamental family issues.

The modern student unlike the former university student of the leisured class is not maintaining a family tradition by following a university career. His parents are not educated to his own level, and thus he finds neither intellectual nor cultural inspiration in the home. Neither has he the opportunity to acquire that innate complete *savoir faire* which is the hallmark of the cultured and educated gentleman. He has lacked the necessary experiences, which have been denied him when young, of contact with a cultured society.

* Red Brick University.

Schools do make some provision for the development of a sense of civic as well as social and personal responsibility and undertake to a certain degree the training of character and intellect. However, the predominating influence on the student is home environment, since it is in the home that he spends the larger part of his time. Attendance at school is daily and the vacations are long. In any case, he has not in such an early state in his development acquired the independence of character to resist his family tradition.

During the university vacation the Redbrick student has to work to supplement his grant. Far from broadening the outlook on life, such vacational experiences lead to intense intellectual frustration and make the student realise more forcibly the precariousness of his social position. He feels keenly the absolute necessity to succeed in examinations as a very beginning to his final aim of securing a stable social status. Thus his intellectual energies and will power are concentrated on working for examinations. He tends to avoid outside activities in university life in order to safeguard his examination chances. Therefore this student may attain a high level of scholarship yet completely lack an all-round cultural grounding which is so necessary to him when he finally takes his place in society.

One may again evoke as a vivid contrast the vacational opportunities of J. M. Keynes* (and the Oxford *élite* of to-day has the same opportunities).

The student is on one hand striving against the cultural barrenness of parental tradition, yet on the other hand is confronted with his own lack of cultural *savoir faire*.

The student of Redbrick should have a dual aim. Firstly, he must resist the cultural apathy of his original environment. Secondly, he must atone for the deficiencies caused by that environment. To achieve this he should forsake his utilitarian approach towards study and acquire a genuine love of culture for its own intrinsic value. For 'culture,' writes Matthew Arnold, 'seeks to do away with social classes; to make the best that is thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light where they may use ideas as it uses them freely, nourished and not bound by them.'

In treating the environmental problem of the Redbrick student one touches the fundamental difference between Redbrick and Oxbridge. The majority of Oxbridge entrants are assured of status in a cultured society. In view of the essential social difference between potential Oxbridge and Redbrick students, Redbrick has to cater for the especial needs of its own particular entrant.

Why should Oxbridge graduates remain the intellectual and cultural forerunners of society? The present state of the Redbrick University need only be transitory. It is interesting to speculate on the next generation of students.

T. SMITH

* *Life of Maynard Keynes*. R. Harrod.

THE ROMAN SOLDIER

He did not die easily;
the thorns and the nails took slow toll
of his emaciated frame.
Neither did he die resignedly,
as the torpor of death spread from his extremities
paroxysms of passion seized his limbs
flattened his back against the worn upright
and forced wild words from his lips,
the like of which I have not heard before or since,
so that even to this day
when I no longer hear the clang of armour
in the barrack rooms, or watch
the women drawing water from the wells,
if my mind is dead to busy street
or lulled by restless murmur
of my wife about the house,
they start within my throat:
'I am the son of God, the truth, the light'
—and later as the passion died—'Believe'
Through me you have eternal life.'
And always now as then my mind is swept back
to an Autumn day when dull rains broke;
the rain washed trees, the fencings and the fields,
the small white dwellings of the cottagers,
and glistening sands, and green rock pools
of inverse day, and red-sailed dhows
which slowly moved between
the yawning arms of bay, and grey sea birds
which swooped, then hung, in torture of suspense,
all seemed new-painted by a master hand,
And although I cannot even now explain
unhesitatingly I knew
—as one who enters light from darkened room
—that life, the life I knew, was but a facet
of another life which could not change.
And even when I saw the man upon the cross,
I thought that what I knew was truth
and cynically amongst my friends,
or at a meal where politicians met,
I used to say, 'There was a man
who knew a way, so egotistically sublime,
that impress only could be made
upon the ignorant oppressed.'
But now, (with beard grown white, and back bent low)
always as I turn my head
a shadow flickers in the corner of my eye,
and although I cannot, for myself,
dismiss what years ago I felt,
even as I formulate the words:

'If by son of God he meant
what then I saw, that each are parts
of one who could be God, then, oh, then,
I could believe that his was way,
indeed the way, the truth, the light'
the wind sighs in the trees,
the rain begins to fall and a dog howls
to the cold and viewless stars.

P. A. W. HARRINGTON

VIENNA 1952

Before a British subject can travel to Vienna he must be equipped with a Grey Pass, which it usually takes about a week to acquire. The journey itself is rather like going to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head, as one is not allowed through the Russian Zone on the Arlberg Express by the direct northern route, but must make a long detour to the south via the Semmering, and change trains twice.

The city of Vienna is surrounded on all sides by the Soviet Zone of Austria, but is itself under Four-Power control. The Americans, British, French and Russians each govern a sector of the city, while about a square mile in the centre is controlled in turn by one of the four Powers. There is, however, complete freedom of movement within the four sectors, and, indeed, provided one does not travel by train, it is easy enough to enter the Soviet Zone—"sed revocare gradus."

When I arrived, I tried to put out of my mind accounts I had heard of life behind the 'Iron Curtain' and the film *Four in a Jeep*, and at first I was favourably disposed towards the Russians, as, after arriving at the Sudbahnhof, I was allowed to stay without interference at a nearby hotel in their Zone. Also, the conduct of the Soviet soldiers was excellent, and it was most impressive to hear them singing, as they marched to their barracks. But it soon became clear that the fine bearing was that of conquerors on parade—conquerors who always appeared armed, and would not associate with the civilian population. Not unnaturally, the Viennese prefer the occasional *peccadillos* of the Western troops who move unarmed in their midst to the cold *aloofness* of this new '*Herrenvolk*.' My revulsion towards Russian inhumanity really dated from the day when one of their jeeps, driving like Jehu, knocked down and killed a pedestrian in the Herrengasse, but did not even stop. This, I was told, was a not infrequent occurrence.

However, the root of the trouble lies not so much with individual Soviet soldiers as with the policy of the Kremlin, which prefers to suspect rather than to trust. Thus every letter which passes through the Iron Curtain from Vienna is censored, and unless it bears the name and address of sender, it is delayed or suppressed. Needless to say, the censors cannot keep abreast of their task. Two years ago, I was told, a letter was delayed four days by the censors, but now it is held up for a week. Presumably, if this trend continues, eventually all outgoing mail from Vienna will be delayed indefinitely.

The official policy of the Russians seems to be to take all they can from Austria and give in return as little as they can, without actually straining the resentment of the long-suffering Austrians to breaking point. In particular, they have made it abundantly plain that they have no intention of giving up the Zistersdorf oilfield and the 250 factories in their Zone, which they claimed to be German assets and annexed as war reparations, and all that the Austrians have out of their oilfields and industries is their pay as employees. In 1949, the Western Powers and Austria herself were willing to buy a Peace Treaty at a price which condemned the country to poverty, by allowing the Russians 60 per cent of all oil produced in Austria in the next fifty years, together with the assets of the Danube Shipping Company, but even that was not sufficient, and the talks broke at the last moment, when Austrian hopes for independence were very bright. Indeed, Communism, as put into practice by the Russians in Austria, seems to work on the axiom, 'What's yours is mine, what's mine is my own.'

Austria's economic situation since the war has been a grim one, and will remain so, as long as the Russians use for their own ends the country's natural wealth, which is almost all concentrated in their Zone; but, largely through American aid, things are improving and the exchange rate of the Schilling, though still low, is rising. In fairness to the Russians, it must be said they have encouraged the Viennese to rebuild on war-damaged sites, and the devastation of some of the scenes from the *Third Man* is no longer in evidence. Some imposing but expensive blocks of workmen's flats have arisen. There is now plenty of food in the shops, and it is no dearer than in Britain; meat is unrationed and plentiful, though, in theory, it may not be sold on Tuesdays. However, wages are very low indeed in proportion to the cost of living, and the average Austrian can afford to eat no more meat than his British counterpart. Unskilled labourers' wages, as compared with the cost of living, are probably about half as high as in Britain, but the professional classes are very hard hit, and often earn no more than 25 per cent of what they would earn in this country.

The Viennese are exposed to an enormous amount of propaganda from the Russians and a considerable amount from the Americans. There is a vast Soviet Information Centre, which is magnificently illuminated by night, while many large portraits are to be seen of a rejuvenated-looking Stalin, with the legend 'You can trust me.' The British, French and Americans have fine reading-rooms, which in winter-time are crowded with people who are merely keeping warm while waiting for a friend. The much-maligned British Council is doing valuable work, simply by keeping its library open, and by its eagerness to help anyone such as myself who came for advice. By the absence of all propaganda, it is convincing the Austrians of British sincerity. Russian propaganda, on the other hand, is reminiscent of the preacher who is reputed to have written in the margin of the text of his sermon, 'Argument weak here, shout like blazes.'

In my dealings with the Viennese, I was struck first with their kindness and courtesy, and secondly by their culture. Friends to whom I had introductions were most hospitable, however straitened their circum-

stances. Anything that could be done to help me was done, with the inevitable 'bitte schön,' and, in particular, the staff of the Nationalbibliothek showed an unfailing courtesy and willingness to oblige.

Viennese culture can best be seen in the love of music and the theatre. Even old-age pensioners, although it may mean stinting themselves of food, manage to go regularly to concerts and the theatre. The Theater in der Wien is always crowded, the vast Volksoper usually has a good audience, and repairs are now almost complete to the Staatsoper, which was damaged in 1945. The opera is nationalised, and although this means that the stars are poorly paid, as a result, opera is as cheap and popular in Vienna as films are in Britain.

I had one very amusing example of Viennese culture. I was in a restaurant talking in English with an Austrian friend, when a man sat down beside us and asked me in excellent American what I was doing in Vienna. On discovering I was a student of Greek, he quoted perfectly in the original the first line of the *Odyssey*, 'Sing to me, Muse, of the versatile man . . .' Having thus won my sympathy, he said he was desperate for British cigarettes, which could, he told me, be obtained cheap in the N.A.A.F.I. I gave him a British cigarette, but he didn't seem to know what to do with it, and finally put it in his pocket. He left me his address in case I could get him any British cigarettes, the more the better. As he left, it struck me he was almost as versatile as Odysseus himself, and that it was typical of Viennese culture that even her black-marketeers quoted Greek.

Vienna is a sad place even to one who has not seen her in her full glory as the capital of Austria-Hungary, or even in the shadow of that glory between the two wars, but the Viennese keep wonderfully cheerful, by thinking not of the present but of the past and the future. They flock to their Versailles, the beautiful Schönbrunn Palace and its gardens, and crowd into the Stephanskirche, and Karlskirche. These magnificent memorials of the past encourage them to dream of the day when Austria will again be independent, and to close their eyes to the fact that the *situs quo* is too profitable to the Russians for them to give it up. Those of the younger generation who are realists, much as they love Vienna, are emigrating or planning to do so.

Perhaps my saddest moment was during my first visit to the famous Wiener *Wälder*, the miles of wooded hills which skirt the north-west of the city. I had climbed the Kahlenberg to see the Danube for the first time, for the river is several miles from the centre of the city. As I looked eastwards over the Danube and across the snow-covered plains to Czechoslovakia and Hungary barely thirty miles away, I could not help feeling a deep pity for these Soviet-controlled peoples, but soon I tempered my sorrow with the thought that Vienna was at least more fortunate than her eastern neighbours. Then I looked at the Danube, but it was not blue, though I was in love—with Vienna and her charming people. May they soon have the freedom for which they yearn.

M. D. MACLEOD

SONG OF WINTER

I love to see when leaves depart,
The clear anatomy arrive,
Winter, the paragon of art,
That kills all forms of life and feeling
Save what is pure and will survive.

Already now the clanging chains
Of geese are harnessed to the moon:
Stripped are the great sun-clouding planes:
And the dark pines, their own revealing,
Let in the needles of the noon.

Strained by the gale, the olives whiten
Like hoary wrestlers bent with toil
And, with the vines, their branches lighten
To brim our vats where summer lingers
In the red froth and sun-gold oil.

Soon on our hearth's reviving pyre
Their rotted stems will crumble up:
And like a ruby, panting fire,
The grape will redden on your fingers
Through the lit crystal of the cup.

ALAN EVERARD

OCCUPE-TOI D'AMÉLIE

Beyond the highest stair are
Faces and figures fretting the expectant eye.
Beyond the edge of *La Monde* is
. . . *l'espoir de la paix au Viet Nam*. . . .
A further flood of those who love
Breaks over the suburban quays
To debouch upon the booking hall
And sweep me by—
'Garance! Garance!'
And the word is borne away.

At the station we have so
Feared for Amélie and her lover.
They are figures of farce
On whom the curtain is falling
And might never reach Venice together.

We made our longest journey
Last summer, returning.
The frenchman *en face*
Embraced a strange girl,
But quite unaccountably
And even as you slept
I held your sleeping hand
With a night voice calling
Avignon, Avignon,
And other sad sounds.

At the station we have so
Feared for Amélie and her lover.
They are figures of farce
On whom the curtain is falling
And might never reach Venice together.

R. C.

JOURNEY TO BRAZIL

It was my twenty-first birthday and the Group Captain had a present for me. As I sat in my Montreal office that thundery July day, he came in and said, 'You're going to Brazil to-morrow, get a bag packed and be up at the Airport at nine to-morrow night.'

As is so often the way with aircraft, we failed to start on time, and I had an extra night in bed before taking off in the morning for Nassau in the Bahamas.

It was my first view of the States from the air, a wonderfully clear day, as we crossed the St. Lawrence and headed south. Over Lake Champlain, and then down through Pennsylvania's industrial belt, to Philadelphia, with beautiful Fairmount Park spread along the banks of the Schuylkill. And so across the sandspits of the Carolina coast at Raleigh, out into the Atlantic.

Passing the outer ring of the Bahamas, at last we sighted New Providence on which Nassau is built. We landed at Windsor Field and were taken to a hotel in town for the night.

For the rest of my journey to Natal I was to be handed over to the U.S. Air Transport Command, and to this had to go to Miami. So next morning I boarded the daily Dakota, and, an hour later, landed at Miami.

Nassau in July is sultry, empty and artificial. I was to report to the U.S.A.F. at a hotel on Miami Beach, for a ceremony called 'processing,' presumably to be neatly packaged for onward transmission to Natal. We drove past cardboard houses, most of which seemed to have boards outside, advertising the presence of a dentist or real-estate agent. These are, apparently, the chief occupations of the citizens of Miami.

Processing was not as fearsome as it sounded. I lunched, handed in my suitcase, and then went back to the Airport. There we met the Customs officers, who were most efficient. They searched my haversack, and stuck stamps on my shaving kit. We eventually took off for Puerto Rico, as dusk was falling.

Dawn broke as we crossed the Amazon delta, having landed in Puerto Rico and British Guiana during the night. The Amazon is muddy and leaves a broad strip of brown between the green of the forest and the blue of the South Atlantic for miles along the coast.

We landed for breakfast at Belem, on the Para river, surrounded by thick jungle, a thousand miles of which lies between it and Natal, our final destination. Here the jungle gives place to scrub, and the town, capital of Rio Grande do Norre, is probably, for its size, the most decrepit in America.

In my week at Natal I visited the town twice. It was not an inspiring place for a shopping expedition. We sat on the verandah of the Hotel Rio Grande do Norre, drinking the local version of brown ale, and watching the business of Natal drift by.

Incredibly mangy donkeys weighed down with bales of cotton; women selling lace; and fishermen who had walked miles from their villages, with catches slung over their shoulders, made for a little interest. The

great entertainment was the train. A tiny four-wheeled vehicle, hidden under a mass of struggling, pyjamaid Brazilians, it rattled past from time to time.

On every wall was painted one or other of the two great slogans of Brazil: 'Cafe Sao Paolo, 100 por cento puro,' or 'Queremos Gebulio' (We want Gebulio). The latter gives an insight into the tortuous politics of Latin America. Gebulio Vargas was then near the end of his third term as President, and had made a law to prevent a president standing for re-election. He usually made the law quite ineffectual by declaring a state of emergency during election week, and cancelling the election. But the election was still five months off, and he was not a candidate. However, there was a campaign in progress for him to be nominated, in spite of the law, hence 'Queremos Gebulio.' Just before the elections took place, he was forestalled in an attempt to produce a *coup d'état* and deposed, with the result that the elections were, for the first time in the history of Brazil, free from corruption.

We bathed in the surf of the South Atlantic, under the watchful eye of the American Military Police, who ensured that we did not sunbathe for more than ten minutes. Sunburn was both painful and criminal, in a latitude 2 degrees south.

Soon my visit to Natal was over, and back I came to Montreal, stopping at the same places as on the outward journey, with the addition of a stay in Bermuda, when the aircraft providentially developed engine trouble. But that is another story.

R. MORRIS

FROM 'THE SEEKER'

IV

The night breeze chills blood in the veins
Of ultimate limbs, the ice particles
Scratch patterns on the glass
With arborescent branching.
Stand out in the stream of air.
Is there numbness in the heart
And ice in the brain?
Are there ice particles in the mind?
Do you taste of the shiver and the freezing?
Is the misted breath congealed before its birth,
Do the stars laugh without mirth,
Are the heavens of ice?

Feel at once the thrill and the shiver,
Expectant, wait in frigidity of air
Sapping your life of warmth
Diverting your body of the use of clothing
Does it freeze the sap in your veins?
'The breathing of the wind is murmuring
Words of desolation, nordic wastes
Tell of the moaning of wolves,
The skeletons of three men
Rot at the thaw of the snow.'

Look, Ice, fear freezes the soul,
Passion fails like a frozen leaf,
Do you see the passage of the shroud?
Do you fear the passage of the pallid shroud?
It cloaks the earth with its passing
It strides the sky with the speed of light
A veil of mist shading the stars
A veil of vapour—the sweat of the earth,
The dew-drop sweat on the face of a corpse,
The frozen pallor of a nun.

Do you see the shroud?
Cower in the rigid grasses
Snap their glass edged stems
Brittle as bones long drying
In a dessicating sand.

Has the sweat dropped from the sky?
Does the night bird shriek?
Are the tombs full
And the coffin lids replaced
Do the catacombs re-echo the primeval void?

'The shroud has passed.
In the teeth of the frozen breeze
The stars were dimmed
The sweat is falling from the sky
Manna upon the desert—
The dry bread is caked
With the dust of silent catacombs.'

JOHN H. CROOK

AMETHYSTS IN THE GRASS

I have always wanted to write. Fairy tales scribbled on the backs of envelopes. School stories copied neatly into fat exercise books. Then a few poems, for the most part conventional and sentimental, but with an occasional gleam of beauty through the hackneyed thought and the hesitant metre. But none of this was satisfying, and there was a need within me which had to be satisfied.

I have always wanted to act too. As long as you are never chosen to act in anything, it is possible to believe that you are an undiscovered genius. When, however, you are in a Shakespearian duologue which comes eleventh out of twelve entries in a musical festival, it is difficult to continue in this belief. . . . The obvious answer was to write a play.

Obvious, perhaps, but not easy. A serious play—and being an adolescent I was in no mood for a comedy—mirrors the thoughts of the writer. My thoughts at this time were multiplying daily and it seemed impossible to sort them out. I had two conflicting views on poetry, three on love, four on beauty and no less than five on religion. Yet my play must have unity. I could create one character to symbolise each of my views and in manipulating these figures I might be able to sort out my own ideas, but a twentieth-century audience would not appreciate the puppet-like characters of the morality plays. Alternatively, I could turn the whole thing into a novel (if it were good enough, someone else would turn it back into a play anyway) and present a world-wide panorama such as *Vanity Fair*. But although I approve of *Vanity Fair*, I do not enjoy it. The only remaining possibility was to create a central character who embodied all my ideas—but one can scarcely write an autobiography at seventeen.

Underlying all these thoughts, however, was the one which dominated, perhaps obsesses, me. It was the realisation that beauty is inseparable from disillusionment. I would read of balls where the chandeliers fired the rich dresses and spotlighted the sapphires on slender fingers; but I knew that beyond the jewelled curtains were factory chimneys stark against the night sky and, beneath them, twisted children with nothing to eat. . . . I would dream of mellow wine welling through diamond pavements, of glittering domes soaring above plumed and perfumed flowers; but I knew that there would be ants in the wine and slugs in the most perfect rose. . . . I would try to come close to God but my back would itch in the middle of a prayer.

It is different now. I no longer need to write. I no longer want to act. In thinking about my play I have sorted out my ideas and made a discovery. I have come to see that not only is there ugliness in beauty, but there is also beauty in ugliness, and in unexpected places. There are flowers in the pig-sty. I no longer need my play. There are amethysts in the grass.

BARBARA WARD

THE DARK FLOWER

The dark flower of sorrow unfurls from the bud of pain.
The bitterness of heart in loneliness clings fast.
Remembrance. . . .
Faces known yet strange. The masks of friends
Withdrawn and empty. Slick words of cruelty.
Alone in my world.
Blind houses towering high and straight, remote and hidden from
entreating hands.
The white sky, and far away, birds soaring, wheeling, free in joy.
The dark sad pines are heavy in travail. The firs in jagged grief.
Here is the cold and vastness of Space, realm of the stars on earth.
Ceaseless seeking but only averted faces and blind stares.
No pity here.
And in eternity what hope? No facile comfort of religion
Or trust in one I cannot tell exists.
The years ahead, sure bearers of this agony of soul.
The daily wounds that draw the tears of blood.
Walking yet unimagined streets at night, in cold and rain,
Unwarmed by golden light of rooms fast shuttered.
No resting-place. Journeying through the mist of life.
The flower of sorrow grows in strange, quick beauty,
Undying in my heart.

R. G.

IT IS NOT THE SAME

It is not the same as it was
The leaves do not breathe the same music
As they fall
And the branches do not describe
Their old angles.
The river is transformed—the reeds do not stretch
Around my soul as they have done.
The water is only a mirror of reflection
No longer the explanation of internal perplexity.
Yet I have twisted my fingers around the water
And floated upon the wind, and I have understood.

But now I stand in a vacuum of beauty
In the intangibility of whirling lilies
No longer understanding—
Oh, I have twisted and floated, my fingers
upon the wind.
But the perfection of one yellow stamen
pierces my aching eyes.

JANET N. WOOD

JAZZ

There are few people who have never heard of jazz. One is, however, tempted to add that there are fewer still who appreciate its precise nature and meaning. The immense confusion about this results partially from the relative dearth of books on the subject. Interested readers will therefore welcome a recent contribution to the problem by Mr. Rex Harris in the Pelican book *Jazz*.

My own remarks on the subject are undertaken in considerable humility. I do not pretend to be an expert but merely an interested inquirer on whom most kinds of music exert a powerful influence. The author, on the contrary, would appear well qualified for his imposing task. Having been keenly associated with the appreciation of jazz music since the age of eight, Rex Harris achieves the seemingly impossible combination of a professional career of consulting optician with that of a jazz authority spreading jazz information as broadcaster, lecturer and journalist.

A common misapprehension is that the music of men like Harry James, Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw is jazz. It is, of course, no more than commercialised swing, although much of it is excellent in its own way. However, a book of jazz has to draw the line somewhere, and Rex Harris confesses that 'this book takes what will inevitably be termed in derogatory fashion a "purist" outlook.' It is, moreover, 'an attempt to vindicate the integrity of those who have kept jazz alive during the long years of its eclipse behind the meretricious blaze of artificially exploited swing.' Let us examine this purist outlook.

Much of the book is a history of the origin and growth of jazz from the early drum rhythms of Africa to the highly developed Western music of the present day. It is fairly common knowledge that, as vast numbers of black slaves were transported to work in the Southern States of America, so the absolute negation of Negro culture and annihilation of anything resembling an art form led to the rise of a new folk music, jazz. 'For jazz was essentially the result of a search for a completely new musical territory and a completely new original form, a desire which was, at the same time, a necessity.' Among the vilest achievements of civilisation is the slave trade and racial and colour prejudice in general. The negro was naturally given no opportunity for education or musical expression, religious or otherwise. Thus when abolition came in 1865 the negro, having no basis of previous knowledge or culture, was compelled to draw upon the inspiration of his own mind. It was therefore quite natural that the negro musician should base his art upon *improvisation*, which has remained the essential characteristic of jazz.

The urge for musical expression had to draw upon available resources which included the simple Work Songs, religious music of the churches, which were now open to all negroes, the famous brass bands, and the Spanish and French music of the Gulf of Mexico. Underlying this was their instinctive aptitude and hereditary knowledge of rhythm. A marked characteristic of jazz is its emphatic beat, on which we may quote Mr. Harris: 'The regular underlying beat in jazz may be traced to the fervent hand-clapping and foot-stamping which was such a feature of these (religious) services rather than to West African drum rhythms which were (and are) far more complicated than those employed in jazz.'

It will be realised that the influence of voices and singing was of prime importance in the development of jazz form. Just as African drum music is an attempt to produce the effects of the human voice by mechanical means, so when legitimate musical instruments came available the negro naturally tried to imitate the sound of his own mass singing. The traditional front line of instruments in a jazz group is thus the clarinet, representing the high voice, the cornet or trumpet for the medium-pitched voice, and the trombone for the deep voice. This vocalisation of instrumental music affected the whole trend of jazz.

Parallel to the development of jazz has gone an accompanying prejudice against it, presumably because of its origin and the often very 'mixed' environment in which it was played. The author emphasises the fact that jazz did not arise from the gutter, as so many opponents have insisted, but was *forced into* the gutter by its non-acceptance in polite society. Jazz music is perhaps more than most art forms, one which knows frontiers of neither class nor race. This is, to my mind, one of its finest subsidiary characteristics.

Another rather ironical cause contributing to this prejudice is the visit of the famous Original Dixieland Jazz Band to England in 1921. 'What musical purity the O.D.J.B. possessed was lost in a wild helter-skelter of trombones played with the feet, funny hats, and saucepan-lid drum-kits. The inevitable result was that when that age gave way to the more sober years of depression of the later 1920's, people were inclined to look back upon the comedy jazz band as representative of a wild irresponsible age of which they were ashamed and the name "jazz" was linked with anything suggesting debauchery or loose living of any kind. The sad part of this turn of events, is that this travesty of the truth prevails to-day and the blind prejudice of many towards *what they think* is jazz can be traced straight back to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band's comic hats.'

These, then, are some of the features of jazz music. The subject is, as I have suggested, vague, and it is remarkable how effectively Mr. Harris has collected and presented his information. As he himself remarks: 'The music was never written down: the exponents themselves drifted into obscurity more often than not, so that the majority of the early history has been handed down from mouth to mouth.' In addition to a factual account of jazz history, the book offers portraits of the great jazzmen of past and present—from Buddy Bolden, King Oliver, Jelly-roll Morton, Sidney Bechet to the present Renaissance, with names like Luter, Bell and Lyttleton. It is, however, no mere adulatory account rich in boring superlatives. Mr. Harris writes in a spirit of critical appraisal, basing his judgments upon references to which he gives the reader access—his lists of recommended recordings represent the best of available discs by the artists of whom he writes. The book is of value for this alone, but is primarily to be recommended as an honest production with the serious aim of cutting through the tangle of confused thought in the public mind, simultaneously exposing certain unreasonable criticism of jazz and its interpreters. In the final chapters of the book, Mr. Harris makes clear the difference between jazz as he understands it and the work of the big 'arrangement' bands of Goodman, James, Dorsey, and, to some extent, Ellington. 'Jazz . . . like all folk music, is emotional in outlook. It is

"playin' from the heart." Improvisational in form, it is highly individual in so far as complete freedom of expression is allowed, limited only by the boundaries of three-part counterpoint and rhythmic foundation. Inspiration, spontaneity, exuberance, absence of inhibition, all these qualities are axiomatic in jazz. Once the ideal number of six or seven musicians is increased by an extra melodic instrument; once a single clarinet is replaced by a section of three or more reed instruments, scored passages, stereotyped arrangements become indispensable (if sanity is to be preserved); spontaneity and the opportunity for improvisation disappears—and the jazz spirit is lost.' He does not deal with Stan Kenton and the 'Progressive' school, and has some hard things to say about Bop. 'Characterised by meaningless displays of grotesque technique and mathematical chord and harmonic progressions, it appeals only to the analytical musical mind and evokes about the same amount of emotional pleasure as a Euclid theorem. Without melody, without logical thematic development, it has been supported only by those who allow the musical journalists to do their thinking for them. Musicians have been intrigued by the outrageous approach of bop—and, while not admitting it, have perhaps been a little deceived.'

While accepting the validity of the first statement and regretting that some bop seems almost wholly technique and nothing intrinsically worthwhile, I believe that, on the contrary, bop has great emotional appeal and in its best form (for example, the small band work of such groups as George Shearing) has a definite melody, which can easily be a mere 'pop' tune—just as traditional jazz can take any melody as its basis—and develops into improvisation in basically similar principle to jazz. (I am ignoring the characteristic unison front-line playing.) It seems to me that in its genuine form bop has as much, if not more, to offer in musical expression by improvisation than traditional jazz, and certainly possesses a more complex and colourful harmonic structure. As the book is about jazz and the subject of bop is only mentioned in passing, I do not criticise Mr. Harris unduly for his opinions on it. However, since I cannot agree with his general verdict on its value, I have considered the subject sufficiently important to mention at some length.

If you are an enthusiast you will doubtless have bought this book already. If you are not, you would still be well advised to read it, as Mr. Harris clarifies the main issues in a convincing fashion. 'Jazz' offers a sound introduction to an art form which has too long been regarded as the shabby ugly sister of the other types of music.

Rex Harris: "*Jazz*": Pelican 2/-

JOHN DASCOMBE

'HERE IS MY SPACE'

And often to a lonely bank
within the sound of restless sea
I take my love and we lie still.
And while the rising winds disturb
tall marshy grass and faintly bring
the salt rank smell of tideless dykes
my body twists and yearns beyond
itself unto my love—like flower
to light in natural ecstasy.

O light, O love, here is my space
wherein my heart can be content
—the world,
 the vain uprush of tireless heart
 in transient joy
 is lost.

The world is this, the world is that,
the world is round, the world is flat;
to-day is peace, to-morrow's war,
on Monday's work, on Tuesday's play . . .
 but love paints all
 in hues of sweet
 forgetfulness.

P. A. W. HARRINGTON

BAVARIA

The soft, drooping cadence
Of the woodland trees
Gladdens my heart.

Brown, foaming streams,
Rain-swollen,
Form but a part of all my pleasure.

The village spread like grain
Along the valley,
Onion-topped church and burnt-sienna roofs,

The wide, deep woods
Green with a Summer haze,
All send me peace.

The dapple-shadowed paths
And butterflies that spiral
In the filtered sun,
All are my joy.

T. B. A. GUNNEL

PENGUIN BOOKS REVIEW
COLLECTED PLAYS OF JOHN M. SYNGE

. . . he had come
Towards nightfall upon a certain set apart
In a most desolate stony place.
Towards nightfall upon a race
Passionate and simple as his heart. (YEATS)

The Collected Plays of John M. Synge is a most welcome addition to Penguin Books (price 3s.). The layout is pleasing, and there is a good short introduction by W. R. Rodgers.

It was Synge who was in large measure responsible for the healthy state of the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, in the first decade of this century, and, if his plays had a mixed reception then, they have since been recognised as masterly pictures—real and ideal—of peasant-life in Ireland.

Wordsworth was only partly successful as the poet of the stolid, self-contained community of the Cumberland Fells—perhaps because of his own temperament, but, more particularly, it might be said, because of the unimaginative humourless nature of the people. Synge, however, living, according to his friend Yeats' direction, on the Aran Islands, as though he were 'one of the people themselves,' found there a simple society, reduced to a bare existence, but rich in folk-lore, imagination, humour and tragedy. If their emotions were inclined to be savage—and the writer added fancy to them—they have, in the plays, that elemental quality which caused Yeats to exclaim: 'I have discovered . . . a man who has the qualities of an Aeschylus and a Sophocles combined.'

Synge was a solitary—he knew the Gaelic people intimately, but he remained observantly aloof from them. He had an ear for the rich idiom and music of their speech, he realised its dramatic value, and he turned it into a poetical and a peculiarly illuminating prose-dialogue. If we were to carry the analogy of Wordsworth further, we might say that he was insensitive in his selection of common speech for poetry. On many occasions, he was bathetic, although, theoretically speaking, there is much to commend in his view. But then, what a world of difference there is between the Cumberland farmer and the Irishman!

Let it not be imagined that, because Synge is dealing with peasant-folk, there is anything rough in the construction of the plays. Aran was his background; the Irish people, his *dramatis personae*; but his early study in Paris of French classical drama provided him with a model framework and he had the true dramatist's eye for the interplay of character.

His expressed opinion was: 'What is highest in poetry is always reached when the dreamer is leaning out to reality, or when the man of real life is lifted out of it, and in all poets the greatest have both these elements; that is, they are supremely engrossed with life, and yet with the wildness of their fancy they are always passing out of what is simple and plain.'

In his power of combining these qualities lies John M. Synge's claim to the immortality of a classic.

M. D. W. GOWERS.

THE CINEMA, 1952

Edt. Roger Manvell

Pelican Books (3s. 6d.)

Pelican books have recently made an appreciable contribution to the furthering of the aesthetic experience of the man in the street.

Their versatility and originality have presented the questing, but impecunious, layman with a chance to enlarge his knowledge of the existence, techniques and appreciation of the Arts. *The Cinema, 1952*, ranks as a part of this valuable contribution. In this book, the third of the series, the cinema is acknowledged and treated as a very potent force in the modern world. The main feature of this latest volume is a series of extracts from the screen plays of six very varied British pictures. For the rest, there is a miscellany of essays. Outstanding among these is Eisenstein's 'Twelve Apostles'—extracts from a diary kept during the filming of *The Battleship Potemkin*—though perhaps those who have not seen this epic film may not feel strongly for Sergei Eisenstein and his problems.

The *Newcastle Journal* commended *Cinema 1951* as a book 'that every cinema-goer should read'—either the content has changed radically in the last year, or the *Newcastle Journal* takes too benevolent a view of the average cinema-goer. *The Cinema, 1952*, will find its appeal mainly with those who consider the cinema something more than 'nine-pennyworth of darkness,' those whose appreciation goes further than bikini-clad figures. Those who claim regular attendance at film societies and patronage of the more obscure cinemas of the West End of London, will find this book stimulating and will find their appetites whetted by the, often tantalising, stills from a multitude of films from the world's studios. Penguin's have given us a book that should find its way to the shelves of all who really love the cinema. For the rest, it is a volume that one would rather find in a friend's house.

FROU-FROU

THE PALM-WINE DRINKARD

By Amos Tutuola

Faber and Faber (10s. 6d.)

To the dispiriting tedium of the University atmosphere *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*, an astonishing story written in English by a West African, comes as a delightful refreshment. The hero took, he says, to drinking palm-wine when still a boy. His father was rich, and he grew up with no other work than to drink palm-wine, 225 kegs of it a day. An expert tapster has to be engaged to keep up with this pace, and all is well until the tapster, himself perhaps a little inebriated, falls from a palm-tree and died. The Drinkard sets off, through the spirit-ridden African bush, to find his tapster in the Dead's town, taking with him his native 'juju' for getting himself out of nightmarish scrapes, and remembering his powerful

name, 'Father of the gods who can do anything in the world.' He picks up a 'faithful wife,' who has been enticed away from her home-town by a 'curious creature,' a 'complete' gentleman very beautiful to behold, who hires all the pants of his body for his daily occasions, but at home is a mere skull! The reader is fascinated by the ingenuous English in which the adventures are described. The language is captivating with its reflections of the native idiom of Mr. Tutuola ('no shoes could size his feet in the world,' and 'after a while opened a rise-up hill which was in that place') and by the extra vigour which often results from the incongruous use of English idioms.

'Immediately I had taken the cola, we kept going, and, again to our surprise, there we saw a man who was walking towards his back, or backwards, his both eyes were on his knees, his both arms were at his both thighs, these both arms were longer than his feet and both could reach the topmost of any tree.'

There is a childlike delight in the infinite—the Drinkard's unquenchable thirst itself, or the hungry creature who 'might eat the whole food in this world, but he would be still feeling hungry as if he had not tasted anything for a year.' Nothing appears too fantastic for the story-teller, who puts all important issues in the narrative in capital letters, such as 'NO ROAD—OUGHT TO TRAVEL FROM BUSH TO BUSH TO THE DEAD'S TOWN,' or 'THE INVISIBLE PAWN ON THE FRONT,' or 'AN EGG FED THE WHOLE WORLD,' and describes everything with the utmost seriousness, even the nefarious but beautiful, 'complete gentleman,' who returned the hired parts of his body to the owners and paid them the vintage money. The practical mind will not tolerate the impossibility of it all; the imaginative will revel in it. The power of description the book displays is remarkable; there is a vivid description of the 'Red-fish' which the Drinkard had to kill with his gun:—

'Its head was just like a tortoise's head, but it was as big as an elephant's head and it had over 30 horns and large eyes which surrounded the head. All these horns were spread out as an umbrella. It could not walk but was only gliding on the ground like a snake and its body was just like a bat's body and covered with long, red, hairlike strings. It could only fly to a short distance, and, if it shouted, a person who was four miles away would hear. All the eyes which surrounded its head were closing and opening at the same time as if a man was pressing a switch on and off.'

But for all its value of imagination and sincerity, the tale would be better heard, not read; one imagines it being lazily intoned in the inflectionless voice of an impassionate African tribal story-teller. Moreover, one suffers from a surfeit of fantasy; in a welter of formless epic the interest lags, and on a second occasion the Drinkard might find his circle of listeners somewhat diminished. However, the book is lively and original; it has the bold sincerity and freshness, and the unbounded imagination, of unsophisticated, unlearned literature.

BRUCE L. CARPENTER

THE ART OF TEACHING

Gilbert Highet

Methuen (12s. 6d.)

Mr. Gilbert Highet has himself the great gift of a teacher in his ability to make the rough places of his expositions plain and the crooked straight. Having read his *Classical Tradition*, where thorough scholarship is combined with a broad view and lucidity of style, I opened this book with an expectation of being stimulated and enlightened.

This book, *The Art of Teaching*, turns every aspect of its subject to the light; and in each case we are given the concrete example and anecdote that both entertain and convince; opinions that are the result of hard thinking and wide reading, without ourselves having to perform the drudgery of following the writer through complex reasoning and evidence to each conclusion. This, therefore, does not belong to the more esoteric class of work on education but may be appreciated by any who are interested in young people and teaching generally.

Mr. Highet, while dealing with teaching, deals with the question of the teacher as an artist, whose methods are those of the artist; his craft, communication and influence. And as the quality of an artist's work depends partly upon the quality of his character, so Mr. Highet stresses the desirable characteristics needed by a teacher, whether he is a parent teaching by example or a great scholar thinking aloud in the presence of his class.

Many may be dismayed by his picture of the ideal teacher, but more will attempt to emulate it. There is an interesting section upon bad pupils and good teachers, as, for instance, in the case of Nero and Seneca, and Mr. Highet attempts to give some psychological explanation, which should at least provide material for discussion.

Mr. Highet's intellectual honesty, coupled with a persuasive and lively style, may cause many who would disagree with him here and there to refrain from expostulation in the light of the general quality of his work.

F. M.

BOOKS RECENTLY RECEIVED

to be reviewed in the next issue

Music 1952, edited by Alec Robertson (Penguin, 2s. 6d.).

The Smoking Mountain, by Kay Boyle (Faber & Faber, 15s.).

Poems, François Villon, translated by Norman Cameron (Cape, 10s. 6d.).

The Novels of Ada Leverson, 6 vols., 7s. 6d. each Chapman and Hall.
Education and the Spirit of the Age, Sir. R. W. Livingstone (Oxford, 7s. 6d.).

Life of Monckton Milnes, James Pope-Hennessy, 2 vols. (25ss. each).

ALSO RECEIVED

New Biology, 12, Edited by M. L. Johnson and M. Abercrombie (Penguin, 2s.).

A Problem a Day, by R. M. Lucy (Penguin 2s.).

POEM

Drawn by pervading sense
My clay-bound limbs arise,
Life's sweetest things pass soft
Before my tired eyes.

The fresh, smooth brownness of a perfect limb
Warm, pure as snow and soft as white swan-down,
The pink-splashed apple-blossom and the leafy green,
The frothy foam-line of an azure sea,
The flimsiness of muslin; sweet fragility
Of precious glass, as crystal water, charmed
Into a lovely form; the leap and curl—
The dancing ecstasy of violins,
The glint of silver, fiery burn of gold,
And fluffy billowing of pink-edged clouds.
All lull into a rapture delicate
Of music and crisp colour,
Of fresh and graceful movement and of light.

They raise my spirit from its chains,
It leaps—and soars in a perfect glide
Floats on the feather-spread wings of the wind
In the folds of flimsy muslin air
Over the water and rolling hills
In a lilting dance of light and music,
In a twist and twirl, swoop and curl,
A frenzied ecstasy, up to the clouds,
Up, up, in a dart and a spin,
An endless spiral, glinting, bright,
Up, up, till I am no more than a spirit
In an airy essence of light.

BRUCE L. CARPENTER

THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND . . .
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Corrupt, blood drenched,
Corybantic, clenched
between Greece and Christ.

Cain's sons, with the stench
Of blood, wrenched
From the land by lust . . .

Greed brought them to Rome.
Greed drove them to dust . . .
Greed, fanned by lust.

And they held the world,
A galloon, curled
Round the Sea of Life.

The silver sea of Æneas,
And the sweating sea of the slave,
That vehicle of Rome's surging forte
to the grave.

Sunk in self—
On this calyx of earth
On the edge of the sea of slaves and corn,
They forgot the wealth
Which lay unborn in their soil.

Careless of Cato,
Rejecting the Eclogues,
They answered the trumpet of spoil
and enlisted,

So

Vicious Rome fell
At the barbarian knell;
The Community went East.

M. WINSTANLEY MANSBRIDGE

'THE MAN WHO DIED'

The Man Who Died contains much that is characteristic of Lawrence. It deals with his interpretation of the Resurrection. The first part tells of the escape from the tomb and of Christ's gradual recovery of strength in a peasant garden. There, Christ is able to review his life up to the time of the crucifixion and contrast it with life as he now sees it manifested in the forms of nature around him. He is helped in this by his recent experiences, because he was, as it were, born again and conscious all the time of the new life slowly flowing into his body.

An extraordinary awareness of physical reality is one of Lawrence's most marked characteristics, and because of it he is able to describe with extreme vividness the fresh impact of life upon Christ. So we see, as if with new eyes, the inhabitants of the peasant's domain—the peasant himself, his wife, the fowls which are kept in his yard, and the fig tree. Thus the cock-pheasant moves in its world of the yard, a distinct phenomenon with a distinct life of its own. We appreciate fully the joy it experiences in answering the call of other cock-pheasants and its solicitation for its hens. Perhaps, however, Lawrence's descriptive powers are at their height when he describes Christ's slow return from death. Christ's every awakening movement is touched upon. We follow the movement of his hands, the movement of his legs, and then the final crash into life as he frenziedly pushes aside the stone, which bars his escape, and crouches like a wild animal in the opening. The effectiveness of this passage owes much to the imaginative sympathy Lawrence has for his character. It is as if he felt the terror and the pain, the wounds and the slow dawning of life upon his own pulses. We are most clearly aware of this when we realise that he describes the events in the order which they would occur in reality.

Now, while Lawrence is so alive to physical reality, it is fairly plain that he is not interested in physical reality as it varies from creature to creature, and from man to man. What he has said about one cock-pheasant readily applies to another. It is not so easy to see how this applies to Christ. For one thing, Lawrence is describing a person who has a well defined historical personality. For another, Christ and the peasant are markedly different persons. Yet, with regard to this last point, they are not so much individual characters as types of particular classes of mankind. So the peasant, while not typical of all mankind, is typical of the common idea of peasant. Christ, on the other hand, is typical, to put it crudely, of men of great self-consciousness. Moreover, if we consider what really interests Lawrence in Christ we see that it is not what he looks like, although Lawrence vividly records it; it is what he felt. And it is not what he would ordinarily feel, but something beyond ordinary feeling. We are given various pictures of Christ as he awakens, but these do not fix our attention. What fixes our attention is the growing awareness of life pouring back into his body. It is as if Lawrence tries to get beyond external characteristics to what the man is actually experiencing in the subconscious; as if Lawrence was aware of another deeper reality. That Lawrence was conscious of this effort to describe another reality, indeed was for the most part only interested in it, can be seen from the following:

"You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond—but I say, "Diamond what!" This is carbon. "And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.") (Letter to E. Garnett, dated 5th June, 1914.)

The effect of such a view of character is to tend to give the character a sense of otherness, in the Wordsworthian sense. We tend to see the Christ of Lawrence's story, for instance, as a part of a greater reality, which has universal implications. Man is not only part of everyday life, but is also motivated by forces, which are shared in varying degrees by all men, and which are, therefore, universal. The obvious corollary of such an idea is to put forward a view of the world which envelopes all men. Lawrence is able to do this with non-human nature:

The man who died looked nakedly on life, and saw a vast resoluteness everywhere flinging itself up in stormy or subtle wave-crests, foam-tips emerging out of the blue invisible, a black and orange cock or the green flame-tongues out of the extremes of the fig-tree. They came forth, these things and creatures of spring, glowing with desire and assertion. . . . The man who died looked on the great swing into existence of things that had not died, but he saw no longer their tremulous desire to exist and to be. He heard instead their ringing, ringing, defiant challenge to all other things existing.

And also with the peasant. But what of Christ? He has enough in common with the rest of creation to realise that he is of the same stock, yet the fact that he is conscious of this stamps him as a creature of a different order. Unlike the cock-pheasant, the peasant and the fig tree, he does not unconsciously submit to the forces of the universe. He stands, aloof. He observes it. And his problem, as we subsequently see it, is to maintain this aloofness, while somehow asserting his unity with the rest of creation. It is a desire to retain identity and yet to lose it; Lawrence, in short, wants to obtain the best of two worlds.

Lawrence's Christ solves his problem by sexual union with a woman. The sex-act is postulated as the link which joins man to the underlying forces of the universe. This is perhaps natural in a man of Lawrence's particular talents. Given a vivid awareness of physical reality and man's otherness, the sex-act, combining as it does extreme physical contact and closest union possible between man and woman—a union which can, at extremity, suspend knowledge of personal identity—seems the only way this awareness can be satisfied. Further, the union Lawrence portrays is an ideal one. It makes no demands on man's personal liberty. The prime necessity is for man to maintain his freedom inviolate. He is at liberty to assert his oneness with creation, but, at the same time, he must preserve his liberty, his aloofness. Lawrence, then, set up a mystique of sex. It was a ritual whereby man, at times, became one with universal forces, but at others remained completely individual. Thus in the poem 'Tortoise Shout':

*The cross,
The wheel on which our silence first is broken,
Sex, which breaks up our integrity, our single inviolability, our deep silence,
Teasing a cry from us.*

*Sex, which breaks us in voice, sets us calling across the deeps, calling,
calling for the complement,
Singing, and calling, and singing again, being answered, having found.*

*Torn, to become whole again, after long seeking for what is lost,
The same cry from the tortoise as from Christ, the
Osiris-cry of abandonment,
That which is whole, torn asunder,
That which is in part, finding its whole again throughout the universe.*

For Lawrence, however, the problem did not rest here. Christ could not use any woman for his sex rite. He had to have a special woman. Lawrence was no libertine. So he chose for Christ a soul companion—a worshipper of Isis in search. Now, if we can accept the significance Lawrence attaches to the sex-act, his theory is perfectly adequate until he makes stipulations about the woman who is to participate in that union. But given the desire for a special woman, moments of union will be exceedingly rare. Moreover, if one tries to translate such a theory into terms of real life, even if one has found a 'soul companion,' awkward complications, to say the least, are almost bound to arise. These complications are the subject of much of Lawrence's prose and verse. So he writes the following poems:

*All I ask of a woman is that she shall feel gently towards me
when my heart feels kindly towards her,
and there shall be the soft, soft tremor as of unheard bells between us.
It is all I ask.*

*I am so tired of violent women lashing out and insisting
On being loved, when there is no love in them.*

And:

*The feelings I don't have I don't have.
The feelings I don't have, I won't say I have.
The feelings you say you have, you don't have.
The feelings you would like us both to have, we neither of us have.
The feelings people ought to have, they never have.
If people say they've got feelings, you may be pretty sure they haven't
got them.*

*So if you want either of us to feel anything at all
you'd better abandon all idea of feelings altogether.*

It is significant that *The Man Who Died* was written towards the end of Lawrence's life. It would suggest that he had yet to prove his theory workable in reality; for he was concerned with the significance of sex throughout a great part of his life. This becomes more apparent if we contract the 'mad, naked intimacy,' which he found soon after his marriage,

with the matrimonial bickerings which form the basis of much of *Kangaroo*. He may have found his ideal woman, but living with her was not always easy. This caused Lawrence to postulate in *The Man Who Died* a woman, who made no demands on the man of her choice. It is doubtful whether such a woman could exist, or whether it is desirable that she should.

In *Last Poems* Lawrence offers an alternative solution to his problem, thereby suggesting that he, too, found the solution offered in *The Man Who Died* unsatisfactory. In some of these poems the mystical side of his nature predominates. They still deal with the same problems of self-consciousness and mystical unity with the motivating forces of the world, but he leaves aside the problem of how this union is to be achieved. He thus simplifies his theory by presenting one, instead of two, variable factors—only one person has to be a factor in the mystical union. This is made clear by 'Shadows':

*And if to-night my soul may find her peace
in sleep, and sink in good oblivion,
and in the morning wake like a new-opened flower
then I have been dipped again in God, and new-created.*

*And if, in the changing phases of man's life
I fall in sickness and in misery
my wrists seem broken and my heart seems dead
and strength is gone, and my life
is only the leavings of a life:*

*And still, among it all, snatches of lovely oblivion, and snatches of renewal
such as my life has not brought forth before, new blossoms of me,*

*then I must know that still
I am in the hands of the unknown God,
he is breaking me down to his own oblivion
to send me forth on a new morning, a new man.*

There is still the same idea of union and return or renewal, but the experience is essentially mystical. Man loses his identity for the moment, then reasserts himself anew. Moreover, there is no question concerning the probability of the experience as there is with his sexual theory. It has, therefore, a wider, and, indeed, a universal application. Given the type of man required, the experience inevitably follows.

It is, perhaps, doubtful whether Lawrence had worked out this latter theory fully. He was a dying man when he wrote many of *Last Poems*. How much his illness affected his awareness of physical reality we shall never know. But as his work stands there are signs that Lawrence was moving towards, perhaps had found a more acceptable solution to the problem, as he saw it, of man and his relationship to the universe.

P. A. W. HARRINGTON

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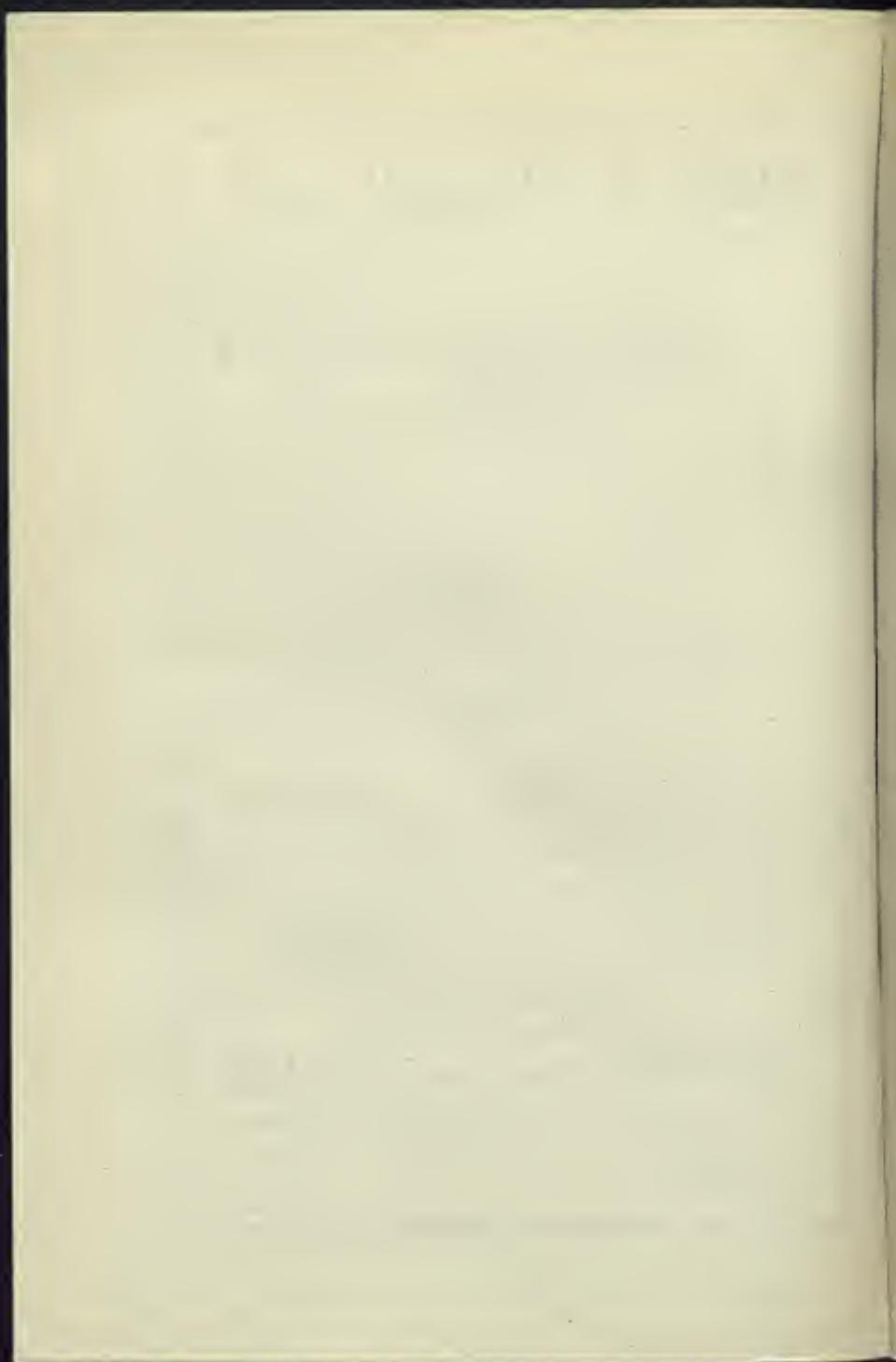
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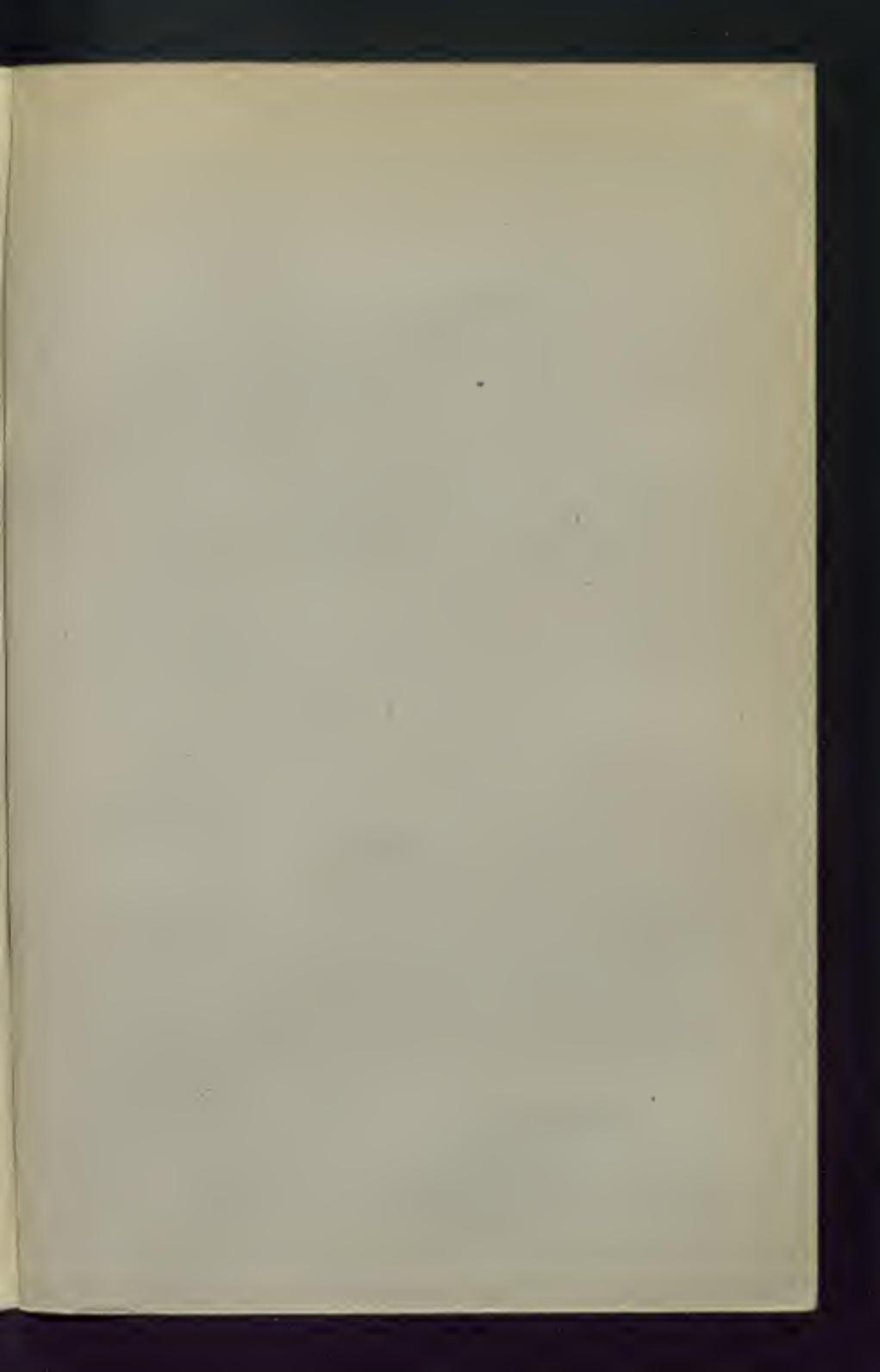
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